

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

S E C R E T STATE 211395

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, PCAT, IN, UR

SUBJECT: CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFER (CAT) TALKS BRIEFINGS

REF: NEW DELHI 12391

1. ON AUGUST 17 ACDA BRIEFED EMBASSY OF INDIA FIRST
SECRETARY GURDIP SINGH BEDI ON RECENT US-USSR CONVENTIONAL
ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT TALKS IN HELSINKI WITH NEA/RA
AND INS REPS ATTENDING, ALONG FOLLOWING LINES:

BEGIN TEXT OF TALKING POINTS.

A. BACKGROUND.

--THE US AND SOVIET SIDES HAVE MET THREE TIMES TO DISCUSS
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CONVENTIONAL ARMS RESTRAINT. A SUBSTANTIVE DIALOGUE
REALLY BEGAN ONLY IN MAY, IN HELSINKI, AFTER WHICH THE
SIDES ISSUED A COMMUNIQUE IN WHICH THEY AGREED (1) THAT
THE PROBLEM OF LIMITING ARMS TRANSFERS WAS URGENT AND
(2) TO HOLD REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETINGS TO EXPLORE
CONCRETE MEASURES THAT COULD BE TAKEN.

--IN MAY THE SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT ADOPTED A PROGRAM OF ACTION CALLING FOR CONSULTATIONS AMONG SUPPLIERS

AND RECIPIENTS ON LIMITING ARMS TRANSFERS. US-SOVIET BILATERAL MEETINGS REPRESENT AN ATTEMPT TO BEGIN TO IMPLEMENT THAT UN MANDATE.

--EVENTS IN LATIN AMERICA, SUCH AS THE JUNE 22 DECLARATION BY THE EIGHT SIGNATORIES OF THE 1974 DECLARATION OF AYACUCHO CALLING FOR A LATIN AMERICAN AGREEMENT LIMITING CONVENTIONAL ARMS AND THE DIPLOMATIC EFFORTS OF MEXICO TOWARD THE SAME END, ALSO GIVE IMPETUS TO WORK OF RESTRAINING ARMS TRANSFERS.

B. OVERALL FRAMEWORK FOR RESTRAINT.

THE US OUTLINED A FRAMEWORK OF RESTRAINT TO THE SOVIETS, AS A WAY OF FOCUSING THE DELIBERATIONS.

--THE PROPOSED FRAMEWORK CONSISTS OF THREE PARTS.

1. POLITICAL/LEGAL CRITERIA.

--THESE CRITERIA WOULD BE BASED ON THE UN CHARTER, UN RESOLUTIONS, AND OTHER INTERNATIONALLY AGREED DOCUMENTS.

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--THEY SHOULD SERVE TWO PURPOSES: ONE, IDENTIFYING LEGAL CONSTRAINTS ON ARMS TRANSFERS; AND TWO, IDENTIFYING RELEVANT POLITICAL FACTORS TO BE TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT IN MAKING ARMS TRANSFER DECISIONS.

--A GOOD BASIS EXISTS FOR THE ELABORATION OF MUTUALLY ACCEPTABLE LANGUAGE.

2. MILITARY/TECHNICAL CRITERIA.

--COMMONLY AGREED MILITARY/TECHNICAL CRITERIA TO SET BOUNDARIES ON THE TYPES AND AMOUNTS OF WEAPONS TO BE PROVIDED.

--THESE CRITERIA ARE EQUALLY AS IMPORTANT AS POLITICAL/LEGAL CRITERIA; AND AGREEMENT ON BOTH TYPES OF CRITERIA IS ESSENTIAL IN ORDER TO HAVE A COHERENT AND COMPREHENSIVE FRAMEWORK FOR RESTRAINT.

3. REGIONAL APPLICATION.

--ARRANGEMENTS TO APPLY CRITERIA IN REGIONAL CONTEXTS.

--IT IS IMPORTANT TO GIVE SUBSTANCE TO CRITERIA THAT
WOULD OTHERWISE BE GENERAL AND ABSTRACT STATEMENTS OF

INTEREST, SUBJECT TO MANY DIFFERENT INTERPRETATIONS.

C. INTERIM RESTRAINT REGIME.

--BOTH SIDES AGREED THAT, IN ADVANCE OF FINAL AGREEMENT
ON CRITERIA, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO REACH INTERIM
RESTRAINT ARRANGEMENTS FOR SPECIFIC REGIONS.

-A BASIS WAS LAID THAT SUCH ARRANGEMENTS MIGHT CONSIST
OF LISTS OF WEAPONS TO BE RESTRAINED.

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--BOTH SIDES AGREED IT WAS POSSIBLE TO DISCUSS ANY REGION
OR SUB-REGION OF THE WORLD, PROVIDED THEY WERE NOT
ARTIFICALLY COTRIVED.

D. ROLE OF OTHER SUPPLIERS/RECIPIENTS.

--BOTH SIDES RECOGNIZED THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF THE
PARTICIPATION OF OTHER SUPPLIERS AND RECIPIENTS IN
DEVELOPING AND/OR SUPPORTING ANY RESTRAINT REGIME.

--BOTH SIDES WERE HOPEFUL THAT OTHER SUPPLIERS AND
RECIPIENTS WOULD FIND IT IN THEIR INTERESTS TO SUPPORT
ARMS TRANSFER RESTRAINT.

--WE HAVE MADE CLEAR TO THE SOVIETS OUR POSITION THAT THE
LEGITIMATE DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS OF RECIPIENTS MUST BE
MET.

E. ASSESSMENT OF ROUND III AND FUTURE PROSPECTS.

--THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE MOVEMENT TOWARD A COMMON UNDER-
STANDING OF GENERAL GUIDELINES OR CRITERIA FOR RESTRAINT
IN ARMS TRANSFERS.

--THE SOVIETS AGAIN APPEARED TO TAKE THESE DISCUSSIONS
SERIOUSLY. HOWEVER, THE NEXT ROUND -- TENTATIVELY
PLANNED FOR DECEMBER TO ENABLE BOTH SIDES TO UNDERTAKE
THOROUGH PREPARATIONS -- WILL RPROVIDE A TEST OF THE
PROSPECTS FOR NEAR-TERM SUCCESS OF CAT. END TEXT OF
TALKING POINTS.

2. BEDI WAS SYMPATHETIC TO IDEA OF RESTRAINT ON
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CONVENTIONAL ARMS TRANSFERS, BUT EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT RESTRAINT WOULD BE APPLIED INCONSISTENTLY AND MIGHT BECOME "DISCRIMINATORY". HE ASKED IF WE WOULD BE ABLE TO HOLD THE LINE AGAINST OUR OWN "MILITARY-INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX" AND CONVINCE OTHERS, SUCH AS BRITISH OR FRENCH, TO

COOPERATE. HE ALSO WONDERED HOW ONE WOULD DETERMINE "LEGITIMATE" DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS OF A COUNTRY. FOR EXAMPLE, HE THOUGHT THAT THE GREAT POWERS SHOULD NOT ATTEMPT TO FORCE RESTRAINT IN THE SOUTH ASIAN REGION WITHOUT FACTORING IN CHINA'S MILITARY WEIGHT AND ITS ASSISTANCE TO PAKISTAN.

3. ACDA (HIRSCHFELD) EXPLAINED THAT WE RECOGNIZE THE POTENTIAL PROBLEMS. NONETHELESS, WE ARE WORKING OUT GENERALLY-APPLICABLE CRITERIA AND HOPING FOR THE COOPERATION OF THE RECIPIENT COUNTRIES. THESE CIRCUMSTANCES WOULD BE INTEGRAL TO THE SYSTEM WHICH SHOULD EMERGE. WE DO NOT INTEND THAT CAT RESTRAINTS BE APPLIED IN A DISCRIMINATORY MANNER. THE US, AS THE LARGEST ARMS SUPPLIER, HAS TAKEN LEAD IN EXERCISING RESTRAINT. WE CANNOT SPEAK FOR THE WESTERN EUROPEANS, BUT BELIEVE THEY UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM. WE RECOGNIZE PROBLEMS OF DETERMINING LEGITIMATE DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS, BUT IT IS DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THAT A FRAMEWORK ACCEPTABLE TO ALL COULD NOT BE WORKED OUT WITH RECIPIENT COOPERATION. USELESS TO SPECULATE FURTHER AT THIS STAGE.

4. BEDI HAD NOT RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS FROM NEW DELHI, BUT THOUGHT THAT THE GOI WOULD "SUPPORT YOUR MOVES" ON CAT. HE OFFERED TO CONVEY THE SOVIET VIEWS ALREADY TRANSMITTED TO THE GOI.

5. EMBASSY MAY DRAW ON TALKING POINTS PARA 1 FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AS REQUESTED REFTEL.

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6. BRIEFINGS WILL ALSO BE GIVEN EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES OF EGYPT, JORDAN, IRAN, PAKISTAN, ISRAEL, MOROCCO, AND SAUDI ARABIA. SELECTED COUNTRIES IN OTHER REGIONS ARE ALSO BEING BRIEFED. VANCE

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